

Message Text

SECRET

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ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 /026 W

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O R 041420Z JUL 73

FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5559

INFO AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH

CINCPAC CP SMITH HI

COMUSSAG NKP THAI

S E C R E T SAIGON 14088

EXDIS

E.O. 11652 GDS

TAGS: MARR, CB, VS

SUBJECT: RVNAF ASSISTANCE TO FANK

DEPT PASS SECDEF, CJCS

REF: PHNOM PENH 8008

1. HAVING ALREADY REACHED THE SAME CONCLUSION ON THE VITAL IMPORTANCE OF THE MEKONG, WE HAVE ALREADY INFORMALLY BROACHED THE MATTER OF GVN ACTIONS LISTED REFTEL WITH THE ACTING FOREIGN MINISTER, WHOSE REACTION WAS FAVORABLE. WE AGREED THAT STATUS OF MEKONG AS INTERNATIONAL WATERWAY QUITE PROBABLY GAVE GVN EVERY RIGHT UNDER INTERNATIONAL LAW TO SEND ITS VESSELS ACROSS THE CAMBODIAN BORDER, ESPECIALLY WHEN REQUESTED TO DO SO BY CAMBODIAN GOVERNMENT, AND EVEN MORE ESPECIALLY WHEN IT WAS ESCORTING HUMANITARIAN CARGO. IT DID NOT SEEM TO EITHER SIDE THAT THERE COULD BE ANY EFFECT OF VIOLATION OF THE PARIS AGREEMENTS UNDER THESE CIRCUMSTANCES. QUESTION OF AIRSPACE OVER INTERNATIONAL WATERWAY WAS NOT QUITE SO CLEAR, BUT WAS THOUGHT PROBABLY TO BE THE SAME.

2. PARAGRAPH 3 OF REFTEL ACCURATELY POSES THE "SINE QUA NON". WE CAN MAKE THE PROBLEM "COMPLEX", BUT IT SEEMS TO US THAT "ONE-FOR-ONE" IS A PRETTY SIMPLE SOLUTION. WHILE LON NOL COULD PROCEED WITH

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THE REQUEST NOW, IT WOULD OF COURSE BE INFINITELY PREFERABLE TO

HAVE A FEW OF THE ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS, WHICH ONLY WE CAN ANSWER,
IN HAND FIRST. GVN UNDOUBTEDLY MAY BE HESITANT FOR PERFECTLY
OBVIOUS REASONS, BUT IT HAS BEEN OVER THREE WEEKS SINCE GENERAL
WEYAND MADE A PRESENTATION TO THE CAMBODIAN GOVERNMENT ALMOST
PROMISING GVN SUPPORT, AND YET WE STILL HAVE NO ANSWERS FROM
WASHINGTON TO THE TECHNICAL QUESTIONS WHICH ARE ESSENTIAL
BEFORE A GVN DECISION CAN BE REACHED.

MARTIN

NOTE BY OC/T: NOT PASSED SECDEF, CJCS.

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NNN

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